National Education Policy Aruba 2030

Summary

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The aim of the National Education Policy Aruba 2030 is to provide a vision and direction for a quality education that is future-proof. In this plan, a strategic vision is outlined for education in Aruba for the next 11 years, one that aligns with international developments benefitting the developments and commitment in Aruba towards the implementation of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This policy document forms the basis of the Plan Educacion Nacional 2030 (PEN), commissioned by the Minister of Education, Science and Sustainable Development.

To arrive at this plan, a 4 phase process was chosen, namely: the orientation phase, the strategic analysis phase, the strategy formulation phase and the strategy implementation phase.

A SWOT analysis has been used to evaluate the National Education Plan (NOP) 2007-2017 and education in Aruba in general. The process, product, implementation and result have all been examined. The General Education Quality / Diagnosis Framework (GEQAF) developed by UNESCO was used as an in-depth tool, which serves to diagnose and analyze the quality of education.

A participatory process was chosen, wherein the various stakeholders were able to contribute to the realisation of a vision for education in 2030. During the different phases of realising the National Education Policy Aruba 2030, a number of activities took place: consultation rounds (67), activities on quality of education (4), surveys for teachers (396) and society (127), desk research, and analysis of all information and data leading to a synthesis.

An education system is part of a country's national strategic policy. The strategic policy at national level is in alignment with international developments. In this respect, we must think in terms of technology and innovation, labor and economy, global politics along with global treaties, joint agendas and education as a United Nations development goal.

Our country is currently in the nation-building phase, where unity in diversity is expressed in a national identity. Innovations in education, in areas such as Papiamento, support this development and act as a unifying factor in our society. Education combines the Aruban identity – in terms of deep community roots, local language and culture – with an open attitude towards global developments.

International developments have an impact on developments here in Aruba; keeping in mind such national developments as SDG committees and human rights- and children's rights committees. We should also take into account technological and innovative developments propelled by certain organizations on the island.

With regards to the economy and the labor market, attention is also paid to the pursuit of development goals, as set out in the United Nations "Agenda 2030". Demographic changes are influenced by economic growth and lower fertility rates. There is a social crisis happening at the social level, and on an environmental level there is an imbalance with economic developments. In the cultural sphere, a perspective informed by the Aruban identity from different angles is important. The role of education in terms of the preservation and development of Aruban culture is of great importance. In addition to culture specific knowledge, culture also plays a role in the development of creativity and creative

thinking, which are seen as important skills for the future. Within the education sector, a number of developments are underway, focused on preschool education, primary education, secondary education, vocational education and higher education.

Data and input provide a picture of the current state of education in Aruba, whereby both stakeholders from within the education sector, as those external ones were able to provide input on the state of our education and contribute to the new vision.

Education must be focused on the development of individual learning needs and take into account the multilingual context of Aruba. There is also a need for alignment within the education system, both locally and internationally.

The consultation rounds showed that the external stakeholders place great importance on Lifelong Learning and 21st century skills. The organizations representing our youth indicate that in education more effort must be made to empower young people, so that those with a strong social-emotional foundation and the necessary knowledge and skills are able to reach their potential. Community groups have indicated that schools should actually be accessible to students with physical and emotional limitations. There should be a safety net in place for those who are being failed by the system. Education must be focused on what pupils are able to do, as opposed to what they are not. A professional attitude is expected from the teachers. Education must be able to reflect modern developments, both in terms of resources and infrastructure, as well as knowledge development and 21st century skills.

The trade unions emphasize the importance of good working conditions, safety at school, a strong care structure, cooperation with various care institutions and more respect for the teaching profession by the community.

The education sector also recognizes the importance of keeping up with developments and preparing the learner for the future as much as possible. Education also expects the community and the labor market to give the learner a place to develop as a person, and as a citizen. Vulnerable target groups in particular must have access to more opportunities in the labor market. Inclusion is considered important, but the necessary support and guidelines are lacking. The education system must be flexible enough to adapt quickly to developments in the community. Parents' vision on parenting also needs to be strengthened. In education, the importance of an appealing pedagogical and didactic approach, educational content, and learning environment are recognized. Students also want a more appealing learning environment that takes real life situations into account. Teachers indicate that a change is needed in education. Child-centered education needs to be the actual focus. The preconditions remain a challenge, such as an up-to-date curriculum, learning environment, resources, infrastructure, care structure, working conditions for teachers (development of teaching expertise, class size, support staff in classrooms), support mechanisms such as efficiency of funding, culture, communication with stakeholders, outdated policy and outdated laws, data, and a monitoring system.

Education as a whole is complex, but together we can make the switch. This requires a different way of working, organizing, and also thinking. Education stakeholders should also be lifelong learners who are not only able to learn from each other, but also to develop and create together. The various activities during the process led to the new vision and a vision of the future, and the "gap" between the current situation and the vision of the future became clear.

Education's mission, values and vision are as follows:

Mission: *to ensure equal access to quality education and to promote lifelong learning for everyone.* Education's mission is to ensure equal access to quality sustainable education, and to promote lifelong learning for all. Education offers the learner a rich educational environment in which the Aruban context is combined with an open attitude towards global developments.

In conjunction with Sustainable Development Goal 4 of the "2030 Agenda", it is important that education should contribute to the three dimensions of sustainable development: the economic, social and environmental dimensions. Human rights and children's rights are respected and maximum human development is the aim.

Values: *joint responsibility for quality education, empowerment, respect, openness, inquisitiveness.*

Vision: *quality education that enables generations (young and old) to optimally develop their individual learning needs, ambitions, and talents, and to contribute to a sustainable society.*

The strategic goals are as follows: *development of individual learning needs, ambitions, and talents, education with equal opportunities for all, sustainable improvement of the quality of education, development of 21st century competencies for a sustainable society in our country and in the world.* These goals focus on constantly improving the education system and the organization for the benefit of the learner, so that they are self-reliant and can make a positive contribution to society and the world. The school and education are of sustainable quality, and offer an appealing learning environment that leads to the desired results. The learner gets equal opportunities in school to develop individual learning needs, ambitions, and talents. Generations of learners have the right competencies for a sustainable society in our country and the world, and provide input for better education.

Real innovation will consist of placing greater emphasis on, and drawing attention to sustainable development as a paradigm; sustainable development is therefore a guiding principle that is ever-present. A number of action steps will need to be taken in order to achieve the goals. These action steps will be of a substantive nature as well as of a pedagogical / andragogical didactic nature, and the preconditions need to be in place.

Measuring is knowing: to achieve the goals, progress is monitored, and the results are measured. The results are measured short-, medium- and long term. Different indicators will be used *(% pupils held back per grade and school type,% early school dropouts,% pupils graduating without delay, ratio of pupils / number of teachers at the school level, and average class size per school*).

Action plan: A multi-year plan will be made together with stakeholders, under the direction of the Department of Education. Furthermore, the strategic goals will be translated into tactical and practical terms, in which processes and activities are further elaborated. Priorities will be determined, and progress monitoring will also be described. Roles and responsibilities, decision-making processes, and communication will be consistently included throughout the entire process. After determining the required additional funds, fundraising processes will be started in order to achieve the intended results, and to contribute to our education.